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BALL-ROOM
BALLADS

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“Thou canst dance in the fearful new fashion.”

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BALL-ROOM BALLADS

By

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DEDICATION

TO THE ILLUSTRATRIX

*Oh Partner, whose footsteps make splendid
The long ringing rooms where they glide
By the spirit of dancing attended,
To the magic of motion allied!
Oh Dancer in dreams long desired
But never beheld till you came!
Permit that the book you've inspired
Goes forth in your name.*

*These songs of the dance and its stories
Could have no fitter sponsor than you,
Who add lustre afresh to its glories
And gild all its glammers anew
With the flight of your feet and the treasures
Of your beauty, your rhythm that seems
The essence elect of all measures,
Oh! Dancer of dreams.*

*For you dance; and the rooms that remember
All dancers declare you their queen,
As you sway to the swing of "September"
And bend to the breath of "Delphine";*

For the "Wedding Glide" glows to your graces
And "Destiny" dreams to your feet
And "Pink Lady" keeps pace to your paces
So fair and so fleet.

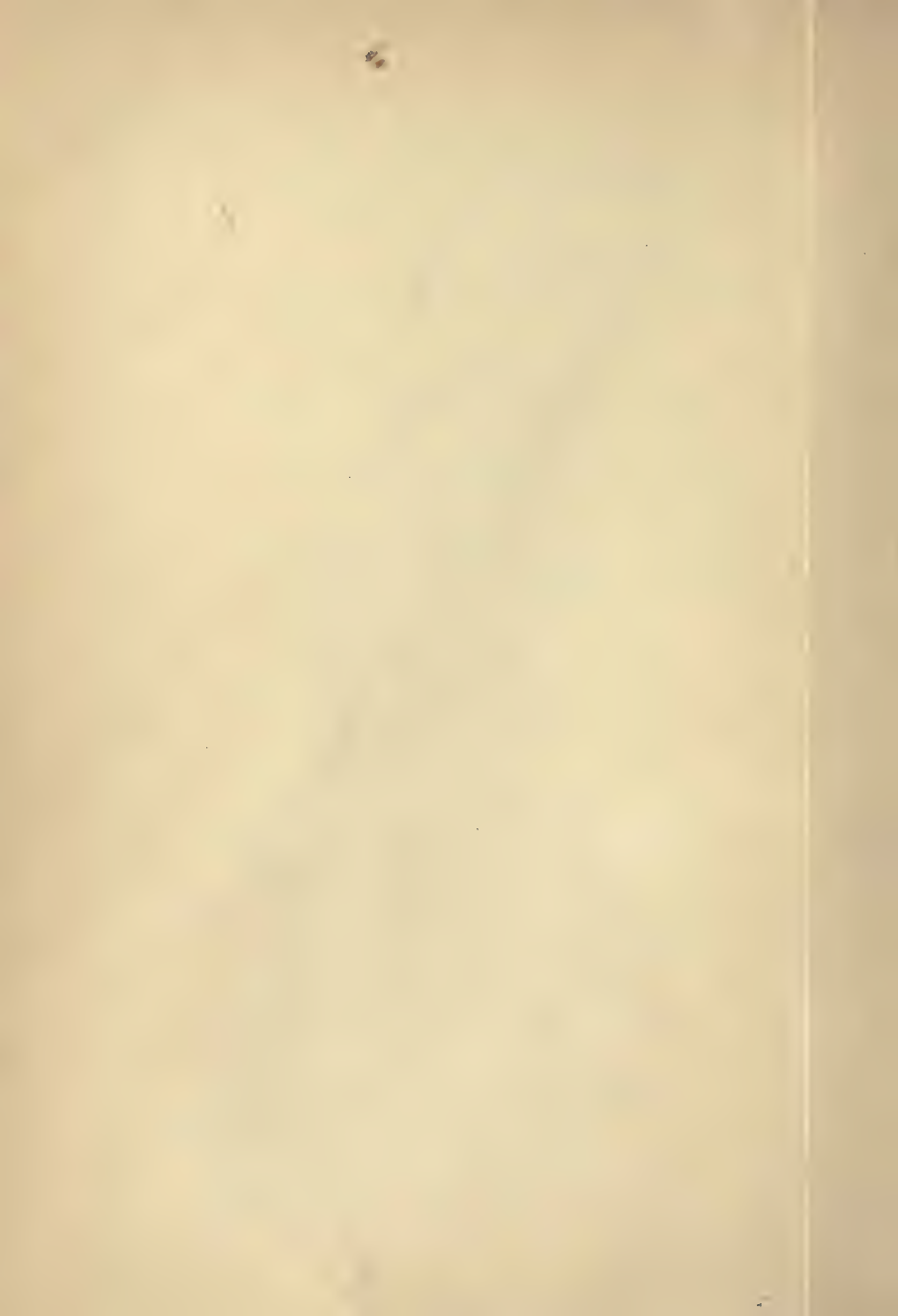
Yea! the dance-tunes declaim you in thunder
The empress of exquisite nights,
The valse-music wakens in wonder
And flames to your fairy-like flights;
And still round your slenderness slumbers,
And still thro' the grace of you gleams
The voice of voluptuous numbers,
Oh! Dancer of dreams.

Oh Artist, whose swift supple fingers
Enliven these ballads of mine!
Oh Dancer, whose daintiness lingers
To lighten our spirits like wine!
I would I could sing such a song as
Should solace all lands with the lure
And the lilt of its verses so long as
The dance shall endure;

That the days might not make us forget you,
And Time might obscure not your fame
Nor the mists of the years that beset you
Ever hide and leave hidden your name;
But that men might, whatever befall you
And where ever the dance-music streams,
Remember, regret and recall you
The dancer of dreams.

*But alas! I am no new Apollo
Engrossing the Gods with my song,
Who pipes and the lame leap to follow,
Who plays and the weak become strong;
No Orpheus am I with my singing
To blazon your name to the breeze
And set the renown of your ringing
To ultimate seas.*

*And yet, tho' the muse of me falters
And fails in my uttermost need
To chant round the base of your altars
Some sweet-set and suitable creed,
At least you will know that these pages
Are written by one who esteems
You the dancer supreme of all ages,
Oh Dancer of dreams.*



THE POETS AT THE BALL

SHAKESPEARE

To dance or not to dance: that is the question,
Whether 'tis better on my feet to suffer
The kicks and heel-taps of outrageous dancers
Or to ignore my painful lack of small talk
And sitting out evade them: to sit and talk:
Good Lord! to talk like fools about the floor,
The music and the thousand times damned weather
This country's heir to, 'tis a conversation
Devoutly to avoid; to sit and talk;
To talk; perchance to flirt: ay, that's the brick;
For from that flirting marriage bonds may come,
And I've a holy dread of matrimony,
That all-devouring monster from whose maw
No prisoner returns; nor seems to try;
For marriage doth make cowards of us all.
I think I'd rather bear my painful corns
Than risk *that* fate—yes, yes, Miss Jones, let's dance.

MARLOWE

Is this the girl that cut Adolphus Jones
And snubbed the calm conceit of Robinson?
Come sweet, make me immortal with a dance!
Come, Lady, come, this is my dance, you know!
Oh! thou art fairer than Miss Allan (Maud)
Clad in the glory of a strip of gauze;
Brighter art thou than subtle Saharet
When she appeared in perfect fitting tights;
More lovely than the mistress of the valse,
Susette, in Oscar's broad-cloth coated arms—
And none but thou shall be my part-*e*-ner.

GRAY

The Band begins another dance to play,
The couples sort themselves with lots of fuss,
The wall-flower wall-wards wends his weary way
And leaves this room to solitude and us.

For us no more the violin shall sing
Or busy pianist ply his fingers light;
Nor vales tempt us with their subtle swing
And rhythmic strains—we'll sit them out to-night.

You boast of dancing well, you prate of power
O'er all elusive one-steps that you tread—
Why waste on dancing this delicious hour?
The paths of dancing only lead to bed.

Full many a maid of choicest grace serene
These dark unfathom'd cosy-corners hide,
Like them be now content to blush unseen
By all save me—my dance, and here we'll bide.

KEATS

Thou cam'st not here to dance, O lovely maid;
No would-be Bostoners shall tread thy toes;
The tune they play this moment has been played
At least a million times before, one knows:
Come! unto supper let us find a path—
To me, whom, bored and longing for my bed,
Politeness to my hostess bids remain,
The hint of supper hath
Opened new vistas, filled my drowsy head
With thoughts of oysters and the best champagne.

Champagne! the very word is like a bell
To ring me back to my most cheery mood!
Come on! these one-steps do not please so well
As they're supposed to do—let's get some food
And drink—Come on! full well the way I know
Down this long passage, up this little stair,
Turn to the right—ah! there's the place I sat
A night or two ago,
At least that hackneyed tune won't reach us there!
Fled is that music: thank the Lord for that.

LONGFELLOW

'Tis my dance with Minnie Muggins,
Minnie Muggins the Beloved,
From her mansion in Belgravia
In the quarter called S.W.!
Well I know that she prefers me,
I have cut out all the others,
Billy Binks, the bunny-hugger,
Tomlinson, the turkey-trotter,
And that very big fool, Squarson—
See their brows as black as thunder,
Watch them smiling, stiff and chilly,
Cold as Narstechyl, the North wind,
Or the North-East wind, Tuchlivva,
I will go and claim her promptly—
This is my dance, Minnie Muggins,
Let's have supper, Minnie—ha! ha!
Let us bid the laughing waiter
Bring the soup, the Insydwarma,
And the bubbling wine, Vervkleeko—
What? you say it is not my dance?—
Lord! she's gone—and now she's dancing
With that very big fool, Squarson,
With that prince of idiots, Squarson—
Farewell, faithless Minnie Muggins,
Farewell, O my laughing waiter,
I shall go to my Bed-sitter,
To my attic in Bayswater,
Soothe my soul with much beer after.

TENNYSON

Come up to the back-stairs, Maud,
For your chaperone has flown
Into supper most likely, Maud
And we shall be all alone;
And with dancing, methinks, I am somewhat bored
And also a little blown.

Queen rose of the rose-bud garden of girls,
Come hither, the dance is mine,
In make-believe satin and bright sham pearls
Come hither, you'll not repine
For, tho' in the ball-room I'm one of the churls,
On the back-stairs I am divine.

SWINBURNE

Thou canst dance in the fearful new fashion,
And thy limbs are anathema yet
To peeresses purple with passion
And maiden-aunts mad with regret:
As they watch where thy foot on the floor is
In a tortuous and turkey-like trot,
The Dowagers fore-damn thee, Dolores,
To somewhere quite hot.

But why should we care tho' their noses
Rise, scarlet with scorn, in the air,
Tho' we tumble and trip o'er their toes-es,
Oh my lady of Tangoes, what care?
Leave them shuddering and shocked at the glories
Of thy lithe limbs laid bare to the knees—
Oh deliriously dancing Dolores
My hug, if you please.

OMAR KHAYYÁM

Arise! for Haxton in among the band
Has rapped his baton on the music-stand,
And lo! the pianist and first violin
Have set a one-step ready to their hand.

Ah! my Beloved! hear the tune that clears
To-night of past regrets and future fears—
What, Jim's dance? Why poor Jim's dance it may be,
But have you noticed how the blighter steers!

Come, could not we with india-rubber conspire
To "cook" your programme making it a liar;
Or tear the bally thing to bits, and then
Fill up another with my name entire.

Ah, Partner mine, you know that you are fain
To dance with me again and yet again;
Come plunge into the crowd and Jim shall look
Thro' this dense ball-room after us in vain.

THE BALLAD OF BROWNE

A TRAGEDY

Mildred Anne Sophia Browne
Was a very proper maid:
Eight each morning saw her down;
Ten each evening saw her laid
Peaceful on her bed of down
In a ribbon-less and staid
Garment which one hears more flighty
Girls refer to as a "nighty"!

Every Sunday, fine or wet,
Saw her in the family pew;
Nor in Lent would she forget
Various dainties to eschew;
And of men she knew as yet
At the utmost only two—
Her papa, a dyspeptic, a
Hypochondriac—and the Vicar.

In a rural spot remote
Thus she passed each quiet day,
Till a London uncle wrote
Asking her to come and stay

(This took place, I'd have you note,
While the rag-time craze held sway)
Mildred with some hesitation
Started off—to her damnation :

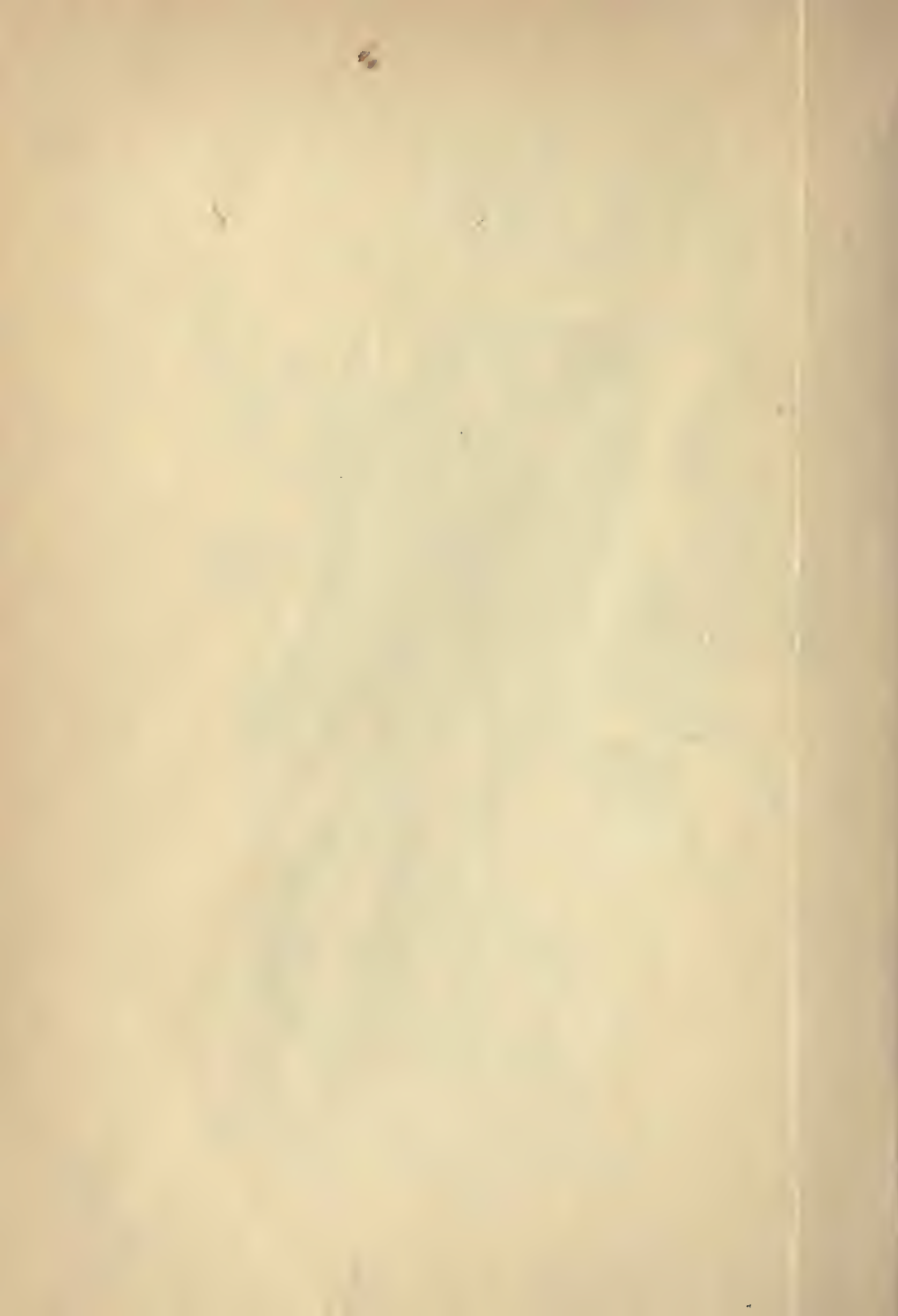
For she went to a large dance
With her mad-on-one-step Aunt :
As, at first, she watched them prance
Very shocked, she gasped "I can't!"
Later on with wistful glance
"I should like to, but I shan't!"
Th' end saw Mildred once so modest
Squirming, hopping with the oddest.

Then began a quick decline,
Swift went Mildred to the bad :
Every evening after nine
Saw her one-stepping like mad ;
Every Sunday, wet or fine,
In a *robe de nuit* which had
Lace and ribbons without number,
Anne made up arrears of slumber.

All the cash she had to spare
Was on dancing lessons spent ;
All her thoughts on one-steps were,
Careless of surroundings, bent :
To have only one idea
Is a rash experiment,
So her passion, day by day, near
And yet nearer grew to mania ;



“Squirming, hopping with the oddest.”



Yes! her madness daily grew
Till if she but heard a note,
It would set her off anew—
Thus (some instances to quote)
Some one whistled " Hitchy-Koo "
In the Tube: she seized his coat
And they danced without cessation
From the Bank to Bond Street station.

Once she heard an organ play
" Alexander's Rag-time Band,"
Flung her parasol away,
Seized a Bobby by the hand,
Trotted him without delay
Down the much astonished Strand;
White with fear, the startled man cursed
Thinking it was Mrs Pankhurst.

'Nother time she heard a bit
Of that simple, homely air,
" Everybody's doing it "—
Every one began to stare;
There's no doubt Anne made a hit
Hugging a commissionaire
(And, at that, a somewhat beery 'un)
From the Ritz to the Criterion.

Once, again, going out to tea,
Far away she caught the sound
Of a band playing " Robert Lee,"
Cast a hasty glance around,

Only saw one man, and he
Disappearing underground—
Ere her chaperone could pursue her
They were dancing in a sewer.

In these stories you may trace
Hints of a disordered brain;
But her ultimate disgrace
Proves that she was scarcely sane,
For *this* incident took place
At her wedding, when the main
Part had been got thro' and this hap-
Py pair wed without a mishap.

In the vestry they had kissed,
Down the aisle advanced the bride,
When a careless organist
Broke into the "Wedding Glide";
Instantly the bridegroom missed
His new consort from his side;
And he saw—could man endure it?—
Anne cavorting with the Curate.

Mildred Anne Sophia Browne—
Ah! her dancing days are o'er,
Never more she'll come to Town
Which her various exploits saw,
She will pack and travel down
To her country home no more—
Now I wish some of you girls would
Go and visit her at Earlswood.

NEW YEAR'S EVE

'Mid flicker of light rippling laughter
And streams of celestial champagne
The old dying year follows after
The years that return not again;
And the New Year comes in with its message
Of music and mirth and mischance—
But may your lot be nothing but pleasure,
Oh Queen of the dance.

For you dance; and the Gods that have fashioned
Your limbs to the lilt of all lands,
Look down with a wonder impassioned
Nor rejoice in the work of their hands;
For the work has outvied its creators,
And the doers are mocked by their deeds,
And the feet they have formed have turned traitors,
To them and their creeds:

For who will bow down to Minerva,
To Hera or Ashtaroth, who?
And the Muse of the dance, who will serve her
That has once trod a measure with you?

Whose dancing is more than immortal,
And would shame all the Muses that rove
In dances divine round the portal
And temples of Jove.

And so, for the sake of sweet vales
And the memory of manifold tunes,
May nothing that feeble or false is
Disturb the smooth course of your Junes;
And may Age as it gently advances
Be soft as weak winds on the shore
For the sake of old nights and dear dances
That return never more.

They are past; and their tunes have receded;
But my wishes remain with you still
Tho' unheard and unasked, and un-needed
To save you, my lady, from ill;
For Time, of destruction insatiate,
Cannot alter nor hope to enhance
Your grace that no pen can delineate,
Oh Queen of the dance.

ROUNDEL

TO A LADY'S DANCING SHOE

Oh little shoe! now soiled but once so neat,
How fair the memories conjured up by you
Of dancing nights you footed, light and fleet,
 Oh little shoe!

Alas! that we can never more renew
Those nights which breath of violins made sweet;
My Lady will have nothing more to do

With me—and all because my wretched feet,
In trying some new step they thought they knew,
Did sorely kick and otherwise maltreat
 This little shoe.

THE RENEGADE

A "LIMERICK" SEQUENCE

There was a young lady who said
"I declare I will never be wed!
What! waste my whole life
As some awful man's wife?
I protest I would sooner be dead!"

She filled all the town with such wails
And paid many Suffragette bails,
Till the Peths and the Panks
Took her into their ranks
And the p'lice took her into their gaols.

But there came a strong man from abroad
Who saw this young girl and adored;
And vowed "It's a shame
She should dull her fair fame
With that sexless, hysterical horde."

So he thought out a wonderful scheme
Whereby he might realize his dream;
And he seized the first chance
For to teach her to dance
(This being part of his devilish scheme).

For from what he had heard of her ma
He assumed that he would not be far
 In the wrong to suppose
 That her feet and her toes
Would twitch to the very first bar.

(Her mamma had for years been a "belle"
From Caithness to Calcutta; men tell
 While they're sitting out still,
 Of her marvellous skill
Till their partners with jealousy swell).

And he argued it thus " I surmise,
If the laws of Hereditary Ties
 Are not perfectly false
 She will take to the valse
As a Labour M.P. takes to lies."

He persuaded her therefore to take
A few lessons, by swearing 'twould make
 Her athletic and strong
 And able e'er long
The largest of windows to break:

And as that strong man had foreseen,
In a very short while she got keen,
 And from vales and two-steps
 Proceeded to do steps
That astounded her uncle, the Dean.

In the end they both went to a ball
Where he danced with none other at all,
 Till she found with much bliss
 That her step suited his
To perfection—and Votes 'gan to pall:

Then he threw down his cards on the table
And vowed himself simply unable
 To dance with her more
 Till she kept to the law;
And she wept, but the brute remained stable:

She tried other partners in vain;
She tried "suffragetting" again,
 But the Cat and Mouse Act
 Drove her perfectly cracked
(She commenced to think Pankhurst insane).

And ever the soul of her cried
For the joy of his one-step, the pride
 Of his valse—till one night
 She surrendered out-right
And danced herself into a bride.

* * * * *

To-day that young girl may be heard
Dismissing as "simply absurd"
 The crimes and the cranks
 Of the Peths and the Panks—
And I hear they're expecting their third.

THE SONG OF THE EXILE

I sit in my verandah chair,
And listen to a score
Or so of "boys" a-chattering
Outside the kitchen door,
And somewhere far off in the bush
A lion's coughing roar.

I hear these long familiar sounds,
And see familiar sights,
The endless sorts of insects round
My two verandah lights;
But half my mind is far away
With thoughts of other nights.

I seem to see the taxis crush
And watch the arc-lamps flare
Down Piccadilly's shining length,
In Regent Street—and where
The Northern night grows bright above
The lights of Leicester Square.

I seem to hear the old, old tunes,
And catch the well-known notes
Of vales that I used to love,
And see the women's throats
And shoulders gleaming white among
The black of fellows' coats:

I wonder what's the newest tune,
And whose the band that plays
In all the London ball-rooms now,
And what's the latest craze:
The Boston was just coming in
In my last London days.

I've been out now—how many years?
I hardly like to guess—
Day after day of heat and sun
And flies and weariness—
Good Lord! It seems a perfect age
Since I wore evening dress.

Ah well! I'm making money here;
I'd never have a chance
Of making half so much at home—
That's obvious at a glance—
But sometimes—oh! I'd sell my soul
For just *one* London dance.

MEDITATIONS OF A TANGO-MANIAC

It used to be my pleasure
To wander West and East,
To hunt for buried treasure
And shoot the savage beast:
But the lands of musk and mango
I'll never see again—
I'd rather dance the Tango
Amid the London rain.

I used to know the true step
For every kind of dance,
For Boston, Valse or Two-step
For One-step, Polka, Lanc-
Ers, Berlin and Fandango,
Veleta, Cake-walk, Crawl—
But now I dance the Tango
And nothing else at all.

And once, if rooms were crowded,
I would at once resort
To some nook nicely shrouded,
Where I paid charming court

And watched my partner's fan go
Like mad to hide her blush—
But now I dance the Tango
In spite of any crush.

For now I see no beauty
In mountain, sea or plain,
I do not do my duty,
I do not strive for gain;
Let each ambitious plan go
To blazes, what care I
So that I dance the Tango
For ever till I die?

Now tho' our German cousins
Should land upon our shores
With aeroplanes by dozens
And heavy guns by scores;
And every able man go
To drive the beggars out,
I'd stay and dance the Tango—
A safer job, no doubt.

Tho' Hardie (Keir) waylaid me
To talk of "honest toil,"
Or Winston Churchill stayed me
To hear his views on oil;
Tho' Tetrizzini sang—oh!
So sweetly in my ear,
I wouldn't stop my Tango
A second's space to hear.

Tho' Gladys Cooper kissed me
And asked me not to go,
Tho' Gaby vowed she'd missed me,
Susanne, she loved me so;
Tho' Gabrielle Ray with lango-
Rous smiles said sweetly "Stay"—
Would I then miss my Tango?
Not I! I'd run away.

And I am always cheery,
For I've no doubt at all
That, tho' when dead, the dreary
And dismal grave, where all
After Life's bright brief span go,
May hold my empty shell,
My soul will dance the Tango
In Heaven or in—Ah! there's the music
starting.

A FAREWELL

TO THE ILLUSTRATRIX—WITH A COPY OF SWINBURNE

Oh daughter of dances departed!
Oh Lady of Tunes that no more
Shall lilt to us laughing light-hearted
Till the dawn-light gleams white on the floor
Oh Partner, whose presence made pleasant
London's latest and loveliest times!
Receive in remembrance this present
Of exquisite rhymes.

For the rhythm and rush of your dancing
Are comparable only to these
Sweet, swift-swinging verses, entrancing
As rhythm and rush of the seas;
And the music and mirth of his metre
Is melody fit for your grace;
And the sound of his singing is sweeter
Than all save your face.

Receive them and read, oh Achæan,
And reading, remember, I pray
"Sweet Home" and the "Glide" and the pæan
Of dances diviner than day:
Receive them as thanks unavailing
For all you have given of joy,
And remember me sometimes bewailing
Those nights at th' Savoy.

A RETURN

TO THE ILLUSTRATRIX

When the sound of the seas that broke in thunder
Round the rocks of Da Gama's Seat
Filled the rafters and roof where under
I lay in the ceaseless, stifling heat,
Thro' all their surge I could hear the sound
Of the dear old tunes, that arose and drown'd
The sound of the seas that used to sunder
Me from the home of your fairy feet.

And dreams divine of the nights departed
When your feet fell fleetier than fleetest wings
Soothed me and sang to me, heavily-hearted
With thoughts of dead delectable things,
With visions and dreams of the old Savoy—
Soothed me and sang of the coming joy
Of the dance you had promised before I started,
One dance at the end of my wanderings.

And now, oh mistress of magical measures,
The hope's fulfilled and the dream come true
With pulse and passion of perfecter pleasures
Than Dryads dreamt of or wood-nymphs knew,

Who danced where the Ilian rivers ran
To harp of Orpheus and pipes of Pan,
For Terpsichore has kept of her treasures
The very best to be given you.

She has made you fleet with her own fair fleetness,
And all the grace of her dancing limbs
She has given and added to your soft sweetness—
The music surges and sways and swims
And the 'cello chants and the piano plays
Thro' the dancing night your pæan of praise,
And the violins vaunt your divine completeness
In rhythmical raptures and rushing hymns.

So tho' the fates unto me have meted
More than my share of sickness and pain,
Yet after all I have cozened and cheated
Death and the grave—I do not complain,
For pain and heat and disease are o'er
They have but hastened that one dance more—
It were worth it a thousand times repeated
To dance with you, Lady, so soon again.

THE PARTNERS OF THE PAST

Partners lost and partners faded!
Many times I have upbraided
My slack self for losing touch
With such perfect dancers, such
Charming girls; one can do much
Thro' the post at so small cost,
Partners faded, Partners lost.

Partners gay and Partners serious!
In some fashion quite mysterious
You have vanished from my ken,
Heaven alone knows how or when—
Have you married other men?
Shall we meet again some day,
Partners serious, Partners gay?

Partners dark and Partners golden,
Whom I danced with in the olden
Times! we travel parted ways,
But, for sake of those old days,
Should you chance to read these lays,
Make on them some kind remark,
Partners golden, Partners dark.

Partners slim and Partners slender!
He who writes has many tender
Memories of your mirthful faces,
Of your lissome dancing grace
And your perfect dancing paces—
Do you ever think of him,
Partners slender, Partners slim?

Partners coy and Partners kissing!
Once we thought Life's self worth missing
For one kiss: ah! how we swore
None had loved like us before!
Careless now, we meet no more,
Other lips are now our joy,
Partners kissing, Partners coy.

Partners gone and Partners vanished!
Me the changing years have banished
From your lives; as ships that pass
In the night we've passed, alas!
But I raise a silent glass
To your memories every one,
Partners vanished, Partners gone.

TWO SONNETS

TO TWO CHAPERONES

I

Oh! dear, serene old lady, whose white hair
Doth frame a face, whereon the passing years
Have left but little trace of life's hot tears!
What dost thou think of sitting smiling there?
Dost dream of days when thou wert young and fair,
As now thy daughter; when thou too didst scorn
To rest thy dancing feet until the dawn
Bade men and maids alike to bed repair?
Thy daughter now—her face is passing sweet,
But not as thine altho' thy hair is white,
And she is wondrous light upon her feet.
And men do say that we shall shortly plight
Our troth; but, Madame, this can never be,
For, 'tween ourselves, I'm more in love with thee.

II

Oh, portly dame! who dost with wakeful eye
 Watch o'er thy winsome offspring at the dance;
 Oh, dowager! who dost with searing glance
Make many a dashing detrimental fly,
But when thou dost some titled person spy,
 Some plutocrat or (to be coarse) a "catch"
 Doth matrimonial projects instant hatch.
Noting thy sombre vigilance in terror, I,
A detrimental with no claims to "dash,"
 Cast out from my fond heart with many a moan
 The image of yon maid I do adore,
For tho' my love is deep it is not rash,
 And well know I that *no* maid could atone
 For a life spent with thee as Ma-in-law.

MY LADY'S BOW

Oh! you bow; and the icebergs of Norway
Come galloping over my soul,
The north wind sweeps in at the doorway
Blown straight from the uttermost pole;
And with spirit be frozen and chilly
I flee—like a man from a cow—
To the tropics around Piccadilly,
Mon Dieu! when you bow.

But you dress in a fashion Achæan;
And the glories of Greece and of Rome,
Of the days when the bright Cytherean
Rose fair from the fairy-like foam,
Grow vivid as tho' I were lying
On the bank of some Ilian stream,
When the goddesses still were undying
And Life was a dream.

And you dance; and the couples pursue you
With glances of anger and hate,
The maids, 'cause they cannot outdo you,
The men, 'cause it isn't their fate

To have *you* for their partner instead of
The girls they originally chose,
For they see at a glance you're ahead of
And fairer than those.

And so, for the sake of your dancing,
For the sake of the dresses you wear,
For the sake of your mobile mouth glancing
In contortions divine when you swear;
For the sake of the one-step Elysian
That we have been dancing just now;
For your nose-powdering methods Parisian
I forgive you your bow.



“Your nose-powdering methods Parisian.”

30'



THE BALLAD OF TWO UNDERGRADUATES

Oh! Johnson was a cheery soul
Whose sober nights were rare;
His debts might stretch from pole to pole—
He simply didn't care.
His lecture list was thrown away,
His gate-bill was immense,
And he was hauled up every day
For some fresh, "grave offence."

But Thompson was a different youth
Who soothed his tutor's mind,
And almost always told the truth
And hardly ever "dined."
He went to bed at ten o'clock—oh
Yes, and was content—
And in a book of neat morocco
He entered all he spent.

At dances Johnson was a nut
Of quite the fruitiest kind;
For bunny-hug and turkey-trot
His match was hard to find.

His duty-dances, I surmise,
Were cut from night to night;
Instead he would monopolize
The prettiest girl in sight.

But Thompson modern dancing viewed
As sinful, held aloof,
Or, if he went, his attitude
Was one of stern reproof;
He chose as partner her whose face
Was plain, whose manners staid,
Sat out in some quite public place
And gave her lemonade.

Now hear my story's end, nor start,
Tho' it is very sad
How fortune shuns the pure in heart
And fawns upon the bad:
Both fell in love with Gertie (she
Came up for Eights one May)
And lo! she got engaged to T—
But ran away with J.

BY MUTUAL CONSENT

“The marriage arranged between . . . and . . . will not
take place.”—*Morning Post*.

HE:

So another ideal's shattered,
Another face turned grey,
And all the grace I flattered
Faded away!

I dreamt of love too spacious
To reck of any chance;
I dreamt all life was gracious
As that last dance:

Oh, dainty days of dreaming!
Oh, rosy lips I kissed!
What comes athwart your gleaming?
What leaden mist?

Is the fault yours or mine, dear?
Am I or you to blame?
Is yours the part that's fine, dear,
And mine the shame?

I hear no voice replying,
I know not why loves die—
But perhaps the Gods undying
Could answer why.

SHE :

So all the things we thought about
And all our loving speech,
All the dear days we dreamt about
Are passed beyond our reach :

We dreamt of children playing
About our garden walls,
We dreamt we might go swaying
Thro' many splendid balls :

But now—well, all is altered ;
I want no child of yours ;
Somehow your foot has faltered
Upon those dream dance floors.

The mingled pain and pleasure,
The sunlit hours divine
That made our lives a treasure
No more are yours and mine ;

No more am I Love's slave, dear—
And yet, and yet, and yet
All the brave dreams he gave, dear,
I cannot quite forget.

34'



“So *that* engagement’s ended!”

THE WORLD:

So that engagement's ended!
We told them all along
(Not that they much attended!)
That they were *far* too young!

We sent congratulation,
But *of course* we had our fears—
The younger generation
Has *such* uncouth ideas!

Besides a *dance* engagement!
It's easy to divine
That she'd had too much dancing
And he'd had too much wine.

What was the *final* friction?
Which is the one hard hit?
For of course this "mutual" fiction
Deceives *us* not a whit!

Most like another lover!
Well, well! he'll live to bless
The day she threw him over—
Come on! it's time to dress.

THE COMMONS' FANCY DRESS BALL

(BY OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT)

(Thanks to the courtesy of the Speaker, our Special Correspondent was enabled to attend last night's unprecedented function: in the columns below he has described the memorable scene in the breezy style and picturesque phraseology which have so long endeared him to readers of the *Daily Wail*. We are authorized to state that the entertainment was entirely non-political.)

Armed with an invitation card resembling an Act,
I made my way to Westminster and found it simply packed;
Which is not very wonderful, for there can ne'er have been
In the whole of England's history so memorable a scene.

All those who guide the Ship of State (and guide it wondrous
ill)
Had laid their arduous tasks aside, prepared to take their fill
Of gaiety and merriment, and England's loveliest dames
Made beautiful the rooms that rang with Britain's best-
known names.

All party strife was laid aside (a state of things which all
Would very gladly see extend beyond a single ball)
But not to talk of politics took I my pen to-night,
But rather some description of the dresses to indite.

McK-nna as A Strong-willed Man created a furore;
But the Reverend F. B. M-y-r was firmly shown the door
With "Your costume is indecent," for they argued that pink
tights
Tho' very nice on pretty girls on him looked perfect sights.

That Right Honourable Gentleman—who has his home in
Wales
And tells on Natural History such very curious Tales,
To wit, the well-known D. L. G--rg- had chosen what to
wear
Most suitably, he represented a M-rc-n- Share.

Mr -r- as Ananias was attractively attired,
The K--s-r as a turtle-dove was generally admired,
And Mr W-nst-n Ch-rch-ll after several hours' toil
Had made himself a costume neat from cans of naval oil.

Sir -dw-rd Gr-y as Osman Bey, Lord B-r-sf-rd as Peace,
The Right Hon. Viscount H-ld-n- as a Nymph from ancient
Greece,
Sir -dw-rd C-rs-n as Parnell, A. Ch-mb-rl--n as Bright,
And Cobden (Mr B-n-r L-w) were each a striking sight.

B-rns as a "Nut" and F. E. Sm-th as a Trades-Unionist,
K--r H-rd-- as the Great Moghul were not things to be
missed;

But the cream of all the costumes, which I have not men-
tioned yet,

Was Mr H-rb-rt -sq--th as a Militant Suffragette.

I think among the ladies Miss C-r-ll- was the best,
As Phryne she was scantily but beautifully dressed,
But Miss Fl-r-nc- W-lt-n ran her close as South America,
While Mrs P-th-ck L-wr-nce looked delightful as a Star :

Miss Ph-ll-s N--ls-n T-rry made a Mary, Queen of Scots,
And M-r-- L-hr, a Giantess, which both attracted lots
Of notice; Mrs H-mphr-y W-rd looked also very well
In Holloway attire as The Elusive Christabel.

M--d -ll-n as an Eskimo in furs was so wrapped up
That she bore some faint resemblance to a large retriever
pup;

But the famous Mrs P-nkh-rst they had to ask to leave
Because she had the face to wear the original dress of Eve.

But tho' very many others, much too numerous to name
Deserve a paragraph upon the robes in which they came,
I must turn now to the supper, which was costly and
enormous,

And organized and given by the League of T-r-ff R-f-rm-rs.

While the drinks were all provided—and I've never met with
so
Intoxicating beverages—by C-db-ry and Co.
Of the various scenes at supper I have only time to mention
That McK-nn- paid Miss S-lv- P. some very marked
attention.

The music (R-dm-nd's Irish Band) was simply superfine
And many politicians were induced to toe the line;
Ll-d G--rg-'s steering merited the loud applause he got
And -dw-rd Gr-y deserves sincere praise for his turkey-trot.

The festivities concluded when they sang "God save the
King"
(They had to chuck K--r H-rd-- out because he wouldn't
sing);
And as the revellers returned home thro' the dawning light,
They all agreed that it had been a *most* amusing night.

THE MASQUE OF THE DANCES

Enter TERPSICHORE, Muse of the Dance, & Chorus of Modern Dancers of all sorts

TERPS.:

Subjects belov'd, I've summoned you together—
And made Apollo send us decent weather—
That we with ceremony might debate
A vital question that hath been of late
Much ponder'd—namely, what's the finest dance?
And, further, that you might have every chance
Of fair selection, I have bade appear
The spirits of all recent dances here;
The Lancers and some others did refuse,
So cut 'em out and from those present choose.

CHORUS:

Oh Goddess! You're really most awfully kind
To give us this nice little treat,
Be sure we won't lose such a good chance to choose
Which dance we consider most sweet.
So trot out your dances—we think you will find
That as critics we're nearly perfection—
Let them tell us their stories and show us their glories
And then we will make our selection.

TERPS. :

Come forth now, O ye dances, one by one
And tell your tales; but see ye get them done
As quick as poss. I'm due to dine at eight
With Mrs Zeus—I simply daren't be late.

[*Enter the MINUET with dignity—recites sadly*]

MINUET:

Stately and slow thro' long rooms candle-lighted
I used to pass in dear dead days of yore,
When I was young and all the world delighted
To dance my steps which now are danced no more.

Many a deed I've seen of war and wonder,
Many a great man's trod my measure thro';
I was the dance on which broke in the thunder
Of the far guns that opened Waterloo.

Where are my men with coloured coats brocaded,
With powdered hair and clouded amber canes?
Where are they now? Their very names have faded,
Naught but the memory of their times remains.

Where are my ladies, graceful dames and stately?
Dead, so long dead with all their dancing done.
No more they'll wheel and curtsy so sedately,
As in brave days e'er yet my course was run.

Now have arisen more hurried generations
Knowing not the grace their fathers used to know,
Young men and girls with neither time nor patience
To learn my measures, intricate and slow.

Coat of brocade and powdered hair have vanished;
But the faint fragrance stirs our memories yet
Of courtly routs and balls e'er I was banished,
While I was still the modish Minuet. [Exit]

[Enter the POLKA cheerily—sings fortissimo]

POLKA:

Oh! I am the Polka all used to enjoy,
The young and the aged, the maid and the boy;
My giddy gay tunes set 'em galloping round
And made up for poor music with plenty of sound.

One, two, three and a hop was the way I was danced;
The hop wasn't graceful, but still it enhanced
The fun of thing without doubt, after all
There's a limit to being demure at a ball.

At least they once thought so and most think so still
To judge from the pictures the papers that fill;
For, tho' I was skittish, I think you'll agree
The One-Step is dashed side more skittish than me.

And, if you inquired, you'd find there still are
Full many who love "See me dance the Polk-a";
But the more modern maiden refuses to know
Any dances but rag-time, so I've had to go.

Yes! now I've retired, content, for in truth
I was cause of a good deal of fun in my youth,
And tho' I am banished from London's bright halls
I still get a look-in at times at Hunt Balls. [Exit]

[Enter the TWO-STEP at top speed—warbles merrily]

TWO-STEP:

Oh! I am the Two-Step, by no means a new step
But a jolly-to-do step which gave you a thirst,
And set you all gliding and slipping and sliding,
And not quite deciding which foot should come first.

Left, right and a slight kick! but mind it's the right
kick,
Or else you well might kick your poor partner's toes,
And, tho' maidens modern are pretty well shodden,
They don't like being trod on, as every one knows.

She might turn and rend you, when, Heaven defend you!
For no *man* can lend you of hope e'en a spark;
And till you have prayed to the furious maid to
Forgive, you'll be "'fraid to go home in the dark."

But when you've done learning my steps, and discerning
Which foot was for turning and which to advance,
Why, then you were willing to vow me fulfilling
Your idea of a thrilling and excellent dance.

So I prospered: at last a new mode brought disaster
And a dance that was "faster" (note *double engtong*),
And I, the old Two-Step, which all used to do-step,
Gave place to a new step—that's still going strong.
[Exit]

[Enter the ONE-STEP fantastically—yells in rag-time]

ONE-STEP:

I'm the One-step, the fun step,
The "really-should-not-be-done" step—
See "Peeress" in the press—
She talks rot, but I confess
That I'm not a dance at all,
But a crawl or a sprawl
That doth appall
The old ladies round the wall—
Still I am the jolliest part of any modern ball.

The chaperones swear
And tear their hair
And cry "Just *look* at that couple there!
Jane, I vow
I won't allow
You to dance like that—so *now!*"

But the daughters, they
Steal away
As the band begins to play
See 'em sway
And display
Lots of stocking—
Ain't it shocking?—
I don't care, I make things gay.

Hear my tunes,
Made for coons
Underneath the southern moons,

Syncopated,
Abbreviated,
Exaggerated,
By dowagers hated
(As I believe I've previously stated)
But they leave all the dancers exceedin' elated.

I'm the One-step, the run step,
The "nice-girls-ought-to-shun"-step—
See "Peeress" in the Press,
But even she must confess
That "Everybody's doing it now"—
Tho' I may cause aggravation
To all those whose situation
Quite forbids participation,
Tho' I may be indication
Of a deep degeneration
In the mighty British Nation,
Still that I'm the greatest fun I think you'll all allow.
[Exit]

[Enter the TANGO gracefully—sings with marked foreign
accent]

TANGO:

Oh! I'm the very latest
And, some people say, the greatest
Of any dance invented hitherto;
And I'm so much the fashion
That I look down with compassion
On all the various dances the best people used
to do.

I was born in Argentina,
You can get there on a liner;
But if you'd see me at my best
You should take the train to Paris—
I've forgotten what the Gare is
But send a line to Messrs Cook and they'll do
all the rest.

There the *midinettes* go trippin'
To my tunes—and they are rippin'—
“*Dans les guingettes au bord de l'eau,*”
As for us, *mon vieux, avançons*
Aux thés qui s'appellent dansants—
There's one in every restaurant—where would
you like to go?

[*Subdued murmurings among certain of the CHORUS—the*
TANGO *addresses them direct*]

Did I hear my name demanded?
Why, how long have *you* been stranded
On some dreary desert island in the sea?
Why, of course I am the Tango!
Want to see me? Then you can go
Any afternoon to Princes and behold me during tea.
[*Exit*]

[Enter the VALSE gracefully—chants with triumph]

VALSE :

I was born while the world watched in wonder
The guns of Napoleon and France
Break Empires and Kingdoms asunder,
I, the lithest and loveliest dance.
Napoleon is gone and his glorious
Bright eagles are shattered and shorn;
But *my* flag is still flaunting victorious
Unconquered, un-torn.

For I am the poetry of motion
And I am the dance of all dreams
Who can swing with the surge of an ocean
Or glide with the glamour of streams;
Who can soothe away sighing and sorrow
With the lure of my lilting refrain;
To-day shall not see nor to-morrow
The end of my reign.

And my languorous songs are serener
And sweeter than tongue can express,
“Blue Danube,” “Estudiantina,”
“Salome,” the “Dollar Princess,”
“Venetia,” the “Guards” and “Dream-Faces,”
The “Widow,” “Pink Lady,” “Spring Maid”—
Their glories die not nor their graces
Grow fainter and fade.

Old dances are dead and forsaken,
New dances arise but to fall
In a while, but my throne is unshaken,
Immortal, outliving them all
I abide, nor take count of the chances
Of fashions new-fangled and false—
I am empress and queen of all dances
For I am the Valse.

[Exit]

TERPS.:

Well now you've seen them all, and heard the voice
Of each—my subjects, kindly make your choice.

[Prolonged and acrimonious discussion among the CHORUS.
Meanwhile TERPS. grows more and more restless, glances
repeatedly at her pocket sun-dial and at last breaks in im-
patiently]

By Cerberus, the great three-headed pup
That guards Hell's portals! will you hurry up!

[The chatter of the CHORUS slowly becomes more harmonious
and finally they advance singing in unison]

CHORUS:

Oh goddess! it's devilish hard to decide
And time's so infernally short
That we haven't a chance to give to each dance
The consideration we ought;
But still in the present discussion we've tried
To sift out the true from the false,
And the greater majority give the priority
In all pleasant traits to the Valse.

TERPS. :

Thanks, thanks, my worthy friends, I quite agree
The Valse o'er all should have priority;
It seems to me without a shade of doubt
The best and finest dance that e'er came out,
And to the end of time it will endure
The best and finest dance of that I'm sure;
Indeed it seems so very obvious
I think you might have spared me all this fuss—
Please hail for me the Olympus motor-bus.

[*Exeunt Omnes*]

AN AFFAIR OF CAVALRY

In a ball-room gay, or rather
In the attached refreshment room,
Stood a member of the Father-
Land with face of direst gloom
And a cup of soup o'erflowing—
There he stood, his red face glowing,
Like a much bewildered groom.

“*Wo ist dann die Fratzenpuppe*
Who *mit* I dis dance have should?
Sent me for *ein Täschensuppe*,
Promised she for me wait would—
Hard found I de Soupcupgetting,
But I did it, not upsetting,
As alone *ein Deutscher* could.

“And—*mein Partner ist gegangen!*
She is vanished! she is went!
And de Band *ist angefangen!*—
Bah! it is some Accident!
Would dis English Missy scorn a
Hero, handsome, *hochgebor'ner*
Vom Dragoonenregiment?”

Meanwhile was the said young lady
Mocking him, I sadly fear,
Hidden in a corner shady,
Whispering in her partner's ear
"Darling Billy, aren't I quite a
Sweet to cut that German blighter;
He will never find us here."

As she spoke, the curtains parted
And a close-cropped head came thro';
"Gnädiges Fraulein" (How she started!)
"Is not dis my Dance mit you?
You maked some small Error, *nicht wahr?*
Mix de Dances numbers, *nicht wahr?*
Missed me at de Rendez-vous?"

Moment's silence; then said Billy,
Billy Biggins, of the Blues,
"Sir, this is no doubt some silly
Misconception—let us choose
By the tossing of a penny!"—
Quoth the maid "Not having any!
He might win and—I refuse!"

This, of course, was rather pointed,
Billy smiled behind his hand,
But such sentences disjointed
Germans do not understand;
So our hero bowed politely,
Clicked his heels and answered brightly
"Fraulein, come! dere is de Band!"

“ Oh! *that* dance was done, my dear sir,”
Thus Miss Molly made reply
“ While you hunted over there, sir,
For a cup of soup, and I
Waited for you till my brother
Came to claim me for another ”
(This was all one whacking lie).

Then that German's voice grew ruder,
And his speech grew stormier,
“ Bah! dat Man is not your *Brüder*,
Dat *verdammte Engländer!*
Gott in Himmel! 'tis some rotten
Plan of yours *um mich zu spotten*,
Me, a Cherman Officer!

“ *Denken Sie* to mock a Member
Of de Cherman Beoble great?
Fear you not to fan the Ember
Of deir all-devouring Hate?
Soon our patriotic Legions
Shall o'errun your finest Regions—
Ach! dann wird es schön zu spat! ”

“ Oh! how insolent,” cried Molly,
“ Kick him, Billy ”; Billy said:
“ If you talk like that I'll jolly
Damn well break your German head.
“ *Ach! mein Freund, sie sich nur ruhen!*
Shall I join *die Mauerblumen?*
Gar nicht! ”—but the girl had fled.

“ Look here, man, you must be balmy—
Stand there talking like a lun-
Atic of your beastly army
And your ‘legions coming soon’ ”—
Wild alarms and excursions,
Scuffle, clinchings and dispersions—
“ Here take that, you damned dragoon!”

That was quite enough to start 'em—
Heavens! how they cursed and swore!
Vainly tried their host to part 'em
As they raged about the floor;
Vain he cried, “ Look here, you asses,
You are smashing all my glasses!”—
But they only fought the more.

Tables fell to bits before them,
Ornaments and pictures too;
Trembling débutantes who saw them
Gathered up their skirts and flew;
Footmen yelled and waiters shouted
When the bold Dragoons were routed
By the Royal Horse Guards blue.

Meanwhile far from all the rattle
In a corner at th' Savoy,
Molly, author of the battle,
Helen of a modern Troy,
With a rising politician
Innocently ate her fish an'
Sipped a glass of Pomeroy.

Later on a German seated
In a taxi very pale
Ever to himself repeated
Curses on an extended scale.
*“Donnerwetter! Höllewinde!
Ach! verfluchte Teufelskinder!
Schweinbund! Lügnerin! Kamel!”*

THE GARDEN OF STROUD HAXTON

(WITH MANY APOLOGIES TO SWINBURNE)

Here where the world is swaying,
Here where lithe bodies seem
Like breeze-blown rushes playing
About a summer stream,
I watch the dancers crushing,
The "double-Boston" rushing,
The débutantes all blushing
With joy (or heat?) supreme.

I am weary of all the City
And all who gather there,
The brokers without pity
The "bull" and eke the "bear";
I am weary of day's long hours
Thro' which one mostly cowers
To try and shun the showers
That take one unaware.

Here, life seems almost gracious,
And far from chaperone's ears
Light laughter grows flirtatious
And girls forget their tears;
This couple gliding hither,
And that retreating thither,
And those two rushing—whither?
None know and no one cares.

No hint of beastly "Lancers"
Of "Country-dance" or "Reel,"
But hosts of splendid dancers
Who swing and sway and steal—
No note of bally bad tunes,
But merry mirthful mad tunes,
And glorious, glimmering glad tunes,
Stroud plays for them that wheel.

Pale without name or number
With much besteped-on corns,
The chaperones strive to slumber
And rend the air with yawns;
Till, when the car has waited
An hour or two belated,
They speak in tones unbated
And brave their daughter's scorns.

"You may be strong as seven,
But still you cannot dance
To five A.M. from 'leven;
Come! give yourself a chance;

You may be fair as roses,
But fairest beauty closes,
Unless it sometimes dozes—
So now to bed! advance!”

Poised beside the “*pianner*,”
Wreathed with rich smiles he stands,
Who plays in such a manner
The fiddle in his hands,
That all our feet seem lighter
And all our life seems brighter
(Until some clumsy blighter
Upon our instep lands).

He plays for short and tall men,
He plays for stout and slim
Till each thinks, most of all men
The music’s meant for him;
Till ugly, big and square feet,
Clumsy, un-debonnaire feet
Turn into flying fair feet
That seem to float and swim.

There go the girls that wither
Shy youths with frigid smiles;
And all the “nuts” draw thither
In all the latest styles,
And also crowds of “rabbits”
(Of most peculiar habits)
Whose clothes resemble drab bits
Of rags from Seven Dials.

We are not sure of dinners,
And chefs are never sure,
Most maîtres d'hotel are sinners
Who make our meals a bore;
But Haxton's ne'er forgetful
Nor ever leaves us fretful,
But only all regretful
That no dance can endure.

From thoughts on cost of living
And on Home Rule set free,
We thank with long thanksgiving
Stroud Haxton's melody;
And banks and books deserting
We don a clean white shirting
And hail a taxi, spurting
Down to where he shall be.

There dun nor debt shall vex us
Nor County Courts command;
Nor Welshmen who perplex us
By bagging half our land;
Nor caterers capricious
Nor milkmen meretricious—
Only the dance delicious
To a delicious band.

THE PITEOUS LAY OF THE MAN WHO DIDN'T DANCE

(INCIDENTALLY SHOWING THE WIDESPREAD PREVALENCE OF THE
MODERN CRAZE FOR DANCING)

Kind folks, listen to my story,
Tho' it isn't one of glory,
Nor of battles grim and gory,
Nor of mediæval France
In the style of Stanley Weyman,
But the tale of a mere lay-man
Who has never been a gay man
Just because he couldn't dance.

Yes! thro' all my life disaster
Has pursued me ever faster,
Just because I couldn't master
These new hops or how to steer—
First my nurse addressed me "Baby,
You must learn the Glide of Gaby—
What! you can't (she smacked me) may be
That will teach you how, my dear."

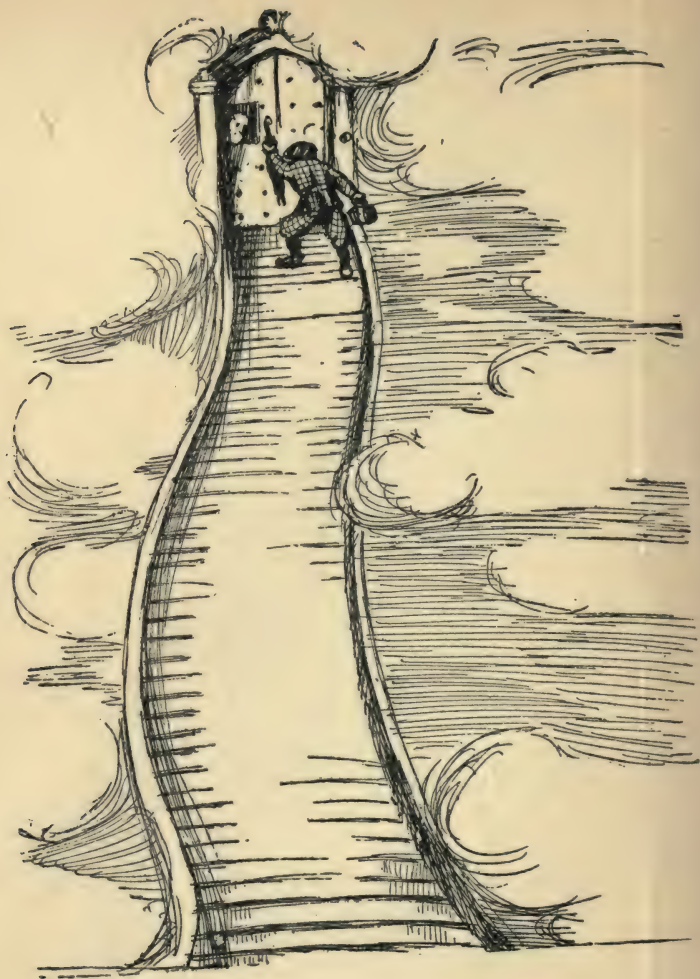
Then when, still at school at Eton,
I was going to be beaten
Hard my little trouser's seat on,
 Quoth the master "If you'll show
Me this dance from Argentina,
I will spare you, Simpkins minor,"
Sad I said "I can't comply nor
 Teach you what I do not know."

I grew up and joined the Army
Thinking "Not to dance can't bar me
Here from fame—the *Mail* will star me
 As a hero soon, no doubt."
But my regiment of Lancers,
All enthusiastic dancers,
Asked "D'you one-step!"—"No! I can't,
 sirs"—
 Whereupon they kicked me out.

So I joined a firm of brokers
With a false name, but the jokers
Soon discovered the hocus-pocus,
 Found I was no dancing crack.
Raged the Boss "D'you think it funny
To come here and take our money
When you can't e'en do the Bunny-
 Hug—get out! you've got the sack."

Then I begged all thro' the City,
Till a very large and gritty
Coalman out of simple pity
 Offered me his job to share;

60'



“And it must have been eleven
When I reached the gates of heaven.”

But as I began to work, he
Asked "Of course you know the Turkey-
Trot?" I didn't! down the murky
Shaft he hurled me, then and there.

This, combined with being weary,
Quite upset my Little Mary,
So they to the infirm-ary
Bore me; but the surgeon cried,
As my narrow bed I tossed on,
"Wasted were my skill and lost on
This poor fool who cannot Boston"
So he left me—and I died.

Yes! I died at half-past seven,
And it must have been eleven
When I reached the Gates of Heaven
Hoping for a peaceful place—
Quoth St Peter "Do you tango?"—
"No, I don't Sir"—"Then you can go
Down to Hell" and banged the clangor-
ous great portals in my face.

TO A PERFECT PARTNER

Mistress and Queen of the sway, the glamour and glow of
the dance,
Queen of the laughing, gay bright women who glitter and
glance
Down long soft lighted halls, where the violins whisper and
weep
For memories of dear dead balls and dancers who've fallen
asleep—
They were fair and their paces as fire and winged with the
speed of a fawn,
But your paces are swift as desire and soft as the coming
of dawn;
And the lilt of your feet as the lilt of the dancing stars of the
air
When the Universe was built and the ends of the sea laid
bare,
Yea! the lightness and lilt of your feet more smooth than a
bird that glides
Down the warm, west wind, more fleet than the swirl of
the foam of the tides;
And the rhythmical sway of the motion of your body, bent
to the tune,
As the slumberous surge of an ocean sleep on an evening in
June,

And the sure strong spring of your knees as the spring of a
Centaur, hurled
Down the hills of the Hesperides in the first fresh youth of
the world—
Oh! the melody melts in your paces, the music takes wings
to your feet
And riots and revels and races thro' every swift, thunderous
beat;
And tempests and tears are passed; and the sorrows of
living are sped,
As long as the dance shall last, all sighing and sorrow is dead,
Time vanishes away like a breath, the hours take flight as a
dream,
Despair, disaster and death are drowned in a musical stream;
The porches and portals of pleasure, the gardens and gates of
delight,
The store-house of joy and its treasure are all thrown wide
to the night—
To the night where the pulse of your feet is light as the
breezes of May,
Blown faint o'er far fields of wheat in the deep, dim dawn of
the day;
Where the languorous grace of your limbs beats time as
you glide thro' the dance
Like the march of triumphal hymns that ring to a conquer-
or's advance;
To the night where the music glows like the soul of a summer
star
And ebbs and recoils and flows—the dancing night where
you are.
Oh, daughter of gliding delights! Oh, Queen of the Valse
and its sway!

Queen régnant of magical nights! to you I give thanks, and
I pray
That, just as the song of the sweet violins drops dead at
the feet of the dawn;
So the world with its weary sorrows and sins and life with
its sneers and scorn
May pass, and leave you unhurt, untouched by the marching
years,
Unstained by life and life's dirt, unflushed by fate and her
fears;
For Love may be weak and diurnal and drift as the storm-
wrecked sand
But the Joy of the Dance is eternal and abides as the gates
of the land:
And the memory of others swoons and fades, but thro'
mist and mischance
Your grace shall return to dear tunes, Oh mistress and Queen
of the dance.

NO ABSOLUTION

The Bishop of Nashville, in Tennessee (Dr Bryne) has placed a ban in the Roman Catholic Church on the "turkey trot," the "tango" and all other "vile dances" . . . The Bishop says "should any priest attempt to absolve a penitent who indulges in infamous dances the absolution would be worthless. . . ."—*Daily Paper*.

In Tennessee's far distant state
 (I think in U.S.A.)
A certain bishop man of late
 Has had a lot to say
On dancing; this cock-sure divine
Goes by the name of Dr Bryne.

He thinks that every "turkey-trot"
 And "tango" and the rest
Are "infamous," sins he will not
 Forgive altho' confess'd;
And so he'll grant no absolution
To those who flaunt his resolution.

Good Doctor Bryne, you are no doubt
 A very worthy man,
But, pray, what do you know about
 These dances which you ban?
Say, did you ever see them danced
Before these stern views you advanced?

You did? Not often, I'll be bound,
And then I am inclined
To think that what you therein found
Was what you wished to find;
It slipped your memory, I feel sure,
That to the pure all things are pure.

For we, who do not look for harm
Therein, no harm can see,
Nor do they cause us much alarm
Of what our end may be;
And, let us add, what's surely true—
We've seen much more of them than you.

But let's suppose them, for the sake
Of argument, appalling—
I cannot think the line you take
Is worthy of your calling;
Methinks you're singularly free
From charity in Tennessee:

For you, most sage and noble soul,
Hold out no sort of chance
Of being forgiven to those whose whole
Offence is just one dance;
Kind Bishop, to forgive indeed
Would seem quite foreign to *your* creed.

Well, spout your views in every state
From pulpits and in papers,
Cast out and excommunicate
Whoever does these capers,
I think—of course I *may* be wrong—
These dances still will rub along.

And,—smile not that sarcastic smile—
There still may be a few
Who'd rather dance these "dances vile"
Than be absolved by you;
Who'll wonder, say you what you please
If the Almighty quite agrees.

THE TANGO

Oh you Tango! you Tango!
You're indubitably IT;
No other craze of recent days
Made half so great a hit:
Where are those nice diabolos
With which we used to play?
Our ping-pong rackets mostly bust,
Our roller skates long red with rust,
Oh where, oh where are they?

* * * * *

Oh the Tango! the Tango!
We find it everywhere,
It's up and down all London town,
From Tooting to Mayfair;
There are Tangos in the restaurants
And Tangos in the clubs;
And, if the *Daily Mail* speaks true,
Large crowds are doing the Tango too
Outside the East End pubs.



“And Tangos in the Clubs.”



Oh! the Tango! the Tango!
It has us in its grip,
And staid men shirk their daily work
And let their business rip
That they may learn the Tango steps
From early hours till late;
And as it's somewhat hard to learn
The amount of money that they earn
Doth much depreciate.

Oh the Tango! the Tango!
It's got us on the hop,
And ladies fair can't even spare
The time to go and shop;
They never see their husbands now
They never see their kids;
All day and night they pose and plot
And try to do exactly what
Their dancing mistress bids.

Oh the Tango! the Tango!
It's quite the latest craze;
Its music seems to fill our dreams
Its measures fill our days;
There are Tango Suppers, Tango Lunches,
As well as Tango Teas;
And I have heard a rumour even
Of Tango Breakfasts (Kindly Heaven
Protect thou me from these).

Oh the Tango! the Tango!
It's everybody's fad,
Exclusive earls and clumsy churls
Are all on Tangos mad;
The Dukes within the Dukeries,
The ploughmen at the plough,
The sailors on the surging seas,
The infants on their nurses' knees,
Are doing the Tango now.

Oh the Tango! the Tango!
It quite absorbeth us;
The man's a fool who says Home Rule
Is half so serious.
Who cares a straw for Johnnie R—
And who for Edward C?
And who for what L.G. may say
On Land Taxation anyway?—
Let's have a Tango Tea.

Oh the Tango! the Tango!
It's conquered all the earth
East, South and North has it gone forth
From the country of its birth;
It's conquered London and Berlin,
Paris, New York, Vienna—
And, should our little lives snuff out
To-morrow, I've no sort of doubt
We'd find it in Gehenna.

* * * * *

Oh you Tango! you Tango!
Oh, have you come to stay?
You dance divine from Argentine,
Will you be lasting, pray?
Will all our giddy grandchildren
Do Tangos on our graves?
Or will they ask with scornful glance
“ Well now, what *was* this Tango dance
About which Grandpa raves? ”

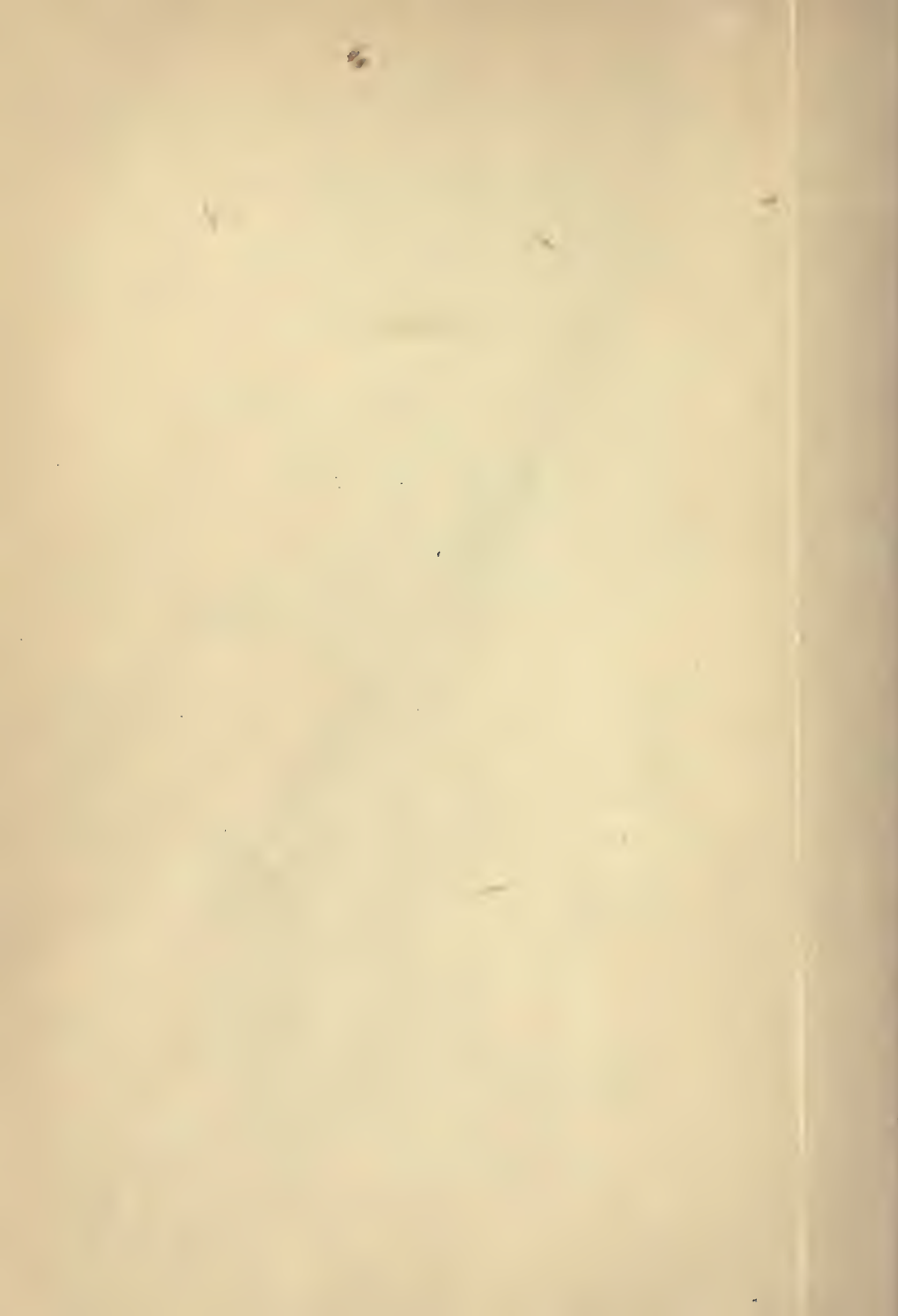
A DANCE FAREWELL

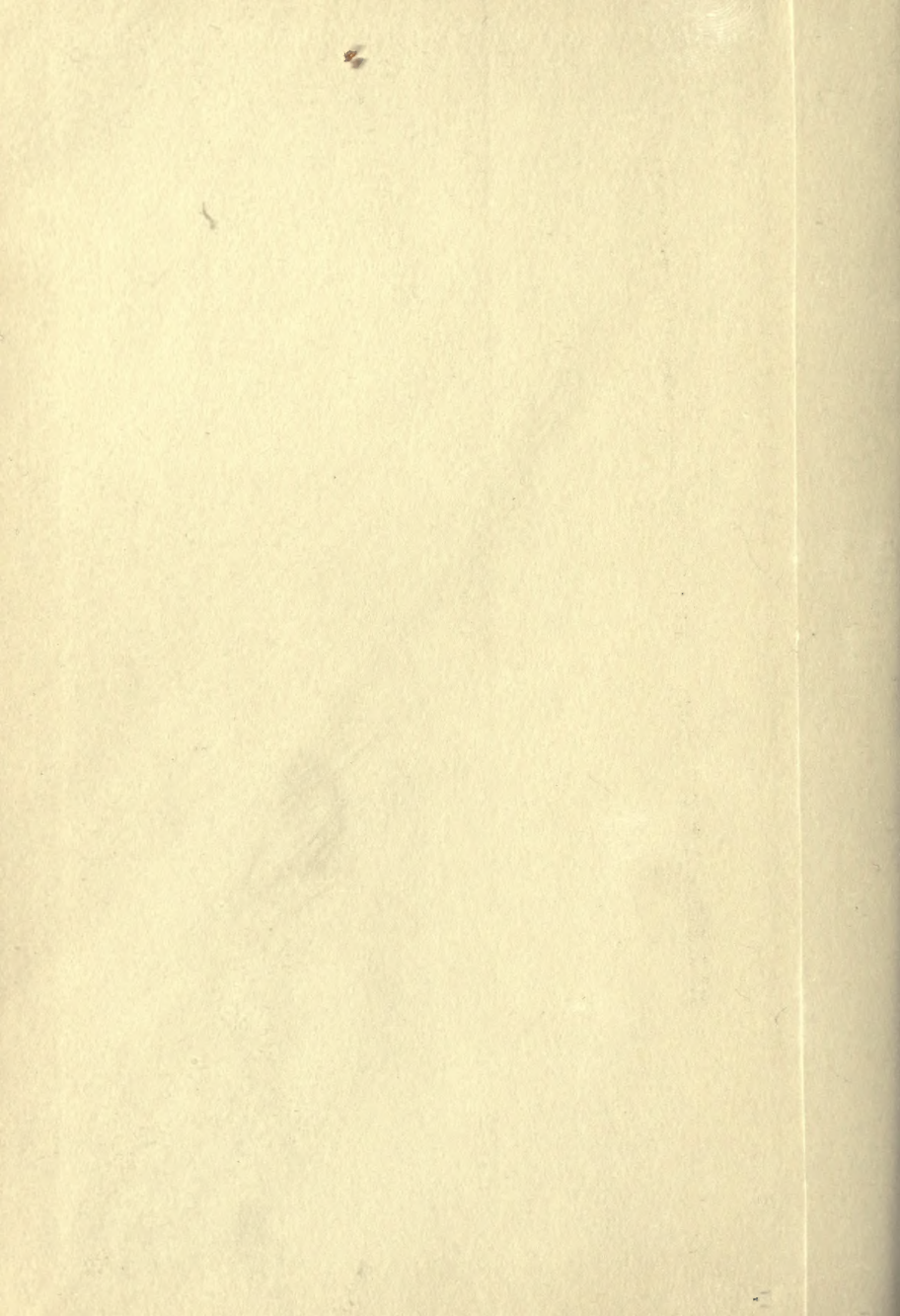
Our dancing days are done, dear heart;
Wilt thou remember me;
Now piano, violin and flute
Are silent unto us and mute,
As I'll remember thee?
Now many a dawning summer sun
Will shine thro' rooms we know not of,
On dancers that we shall not love
And dancing days are done?

Thro' many lands, on many seas,
I wander East and West,
But still those memories, subtle, sweet,
Haunt all the goings of my feet
And will not let them rest;
But still they lilt as once of yore
When we two swayed down laughing halls
And loved thro' long-forgotten balls
E'er dancing nights were o'er.

Beloved, ah! for one more night,
Just one more night of joy,
Once more to see thy soft sweet face
Faint-flushed with motion and the pace
Of tunes that could not cloy!
Once more to wheel and glide and run
Just as we often used to do,
E'er Fate bore heavy on us two
And dancing days were done.

Farewell, dear heart! the lights grow dim,
And all the dear dance tunes
And all the wild walse-music seems
As evanescent as the dreams
In misty moonlit Junes
(That for a moment surge before
The watching of our wondering eyes),
The last note throbs and thrills—and dies.
Our dancing nights are o'er.





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Orde, K. L.
Ball-room ballads.

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